Rationalisation of duty structure on various materials

1673 SHRI P. N. SUKUL. Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present structure of duty leviable on various materials, including chemicals used as raw materials for other industries, needs to be rationalised, and

(b) if so, what changes Government may like to make in the said structure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) and (b) The process of rationalisation of tax structure is a continuing one. Various measures to simplify and rationalise the duty structure have been introduced through the Annual Finance Bills and notifications in the past and further steps will continue to be taken consistent with revenue needs of the Government, and adequate protection to indigenous industry.

Places of Worship along Indo-Pak Border

1674 SHRI F. M. KHAN Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of construction of places of worship along the Indo-Pak border in Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat; and

(b) if so, what steps the Central Government have taken to put a stop to such activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the Government of Punjab, construction of a few places of worship has been noticed recently in district Gurdaspur. The concerned authorities have been directed to keep a close watch on the situation.

The Governments of Gujarat and Rajasthan have informed that no construction of places of worship along the border in their States has come to notice.

1675. [*Transferred to the 3rd December, 1987*].

Effects of Import Liberalisation on local Manufacturers

1676. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that liberalisation of imports has adversely affected the objective of self reliance and that the local manufactures of such products have not bten able to complete with the imported products for obvious reasons; and

(b) if so, what remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) and (b) The objective of self reliance has in no way been compromised by the liberalised import regime. The import policy fully takes into consideration the need for providing legitimate protection to the indigenous industry and full encouragement is given for import substitution

Destruction of Forests by Mining Operations in Shivpuri and Guna Districts of Madhya Pradesh

1677. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received reports that vast areas of rich forests have been and are still being destroyed by miming operation that have been permitted in Shivpuri and Guna destrict of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, what action has been taken by the Central Government in the matter and,

(c) how many mining and quarry leases have been granted in these two districts during the last three years, area-wise?